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TIMETABLES - Buying all public TTs. Amtrak and earlier. Send your list. Collections too. C. F. Loucks. 199 Wayland St., Hamden, CT 06518.

"NORTHWEST SUBURBAN MASS TRANSIT DISTRICT" illus. description of Chicago commuter line. 14 pages total (incl. 8-8x10 pix), spiral bound. $2.60 ppd. Ky. res. add 13¢ sales tax. B. L. Wright, 1400 Valley Drive, Louisville, KY 40213.

PSGR. CAR SLIDES wanted by R.S. Brundage, 2440 E. 51 St, Apt C2, Tulsa OK 74105.

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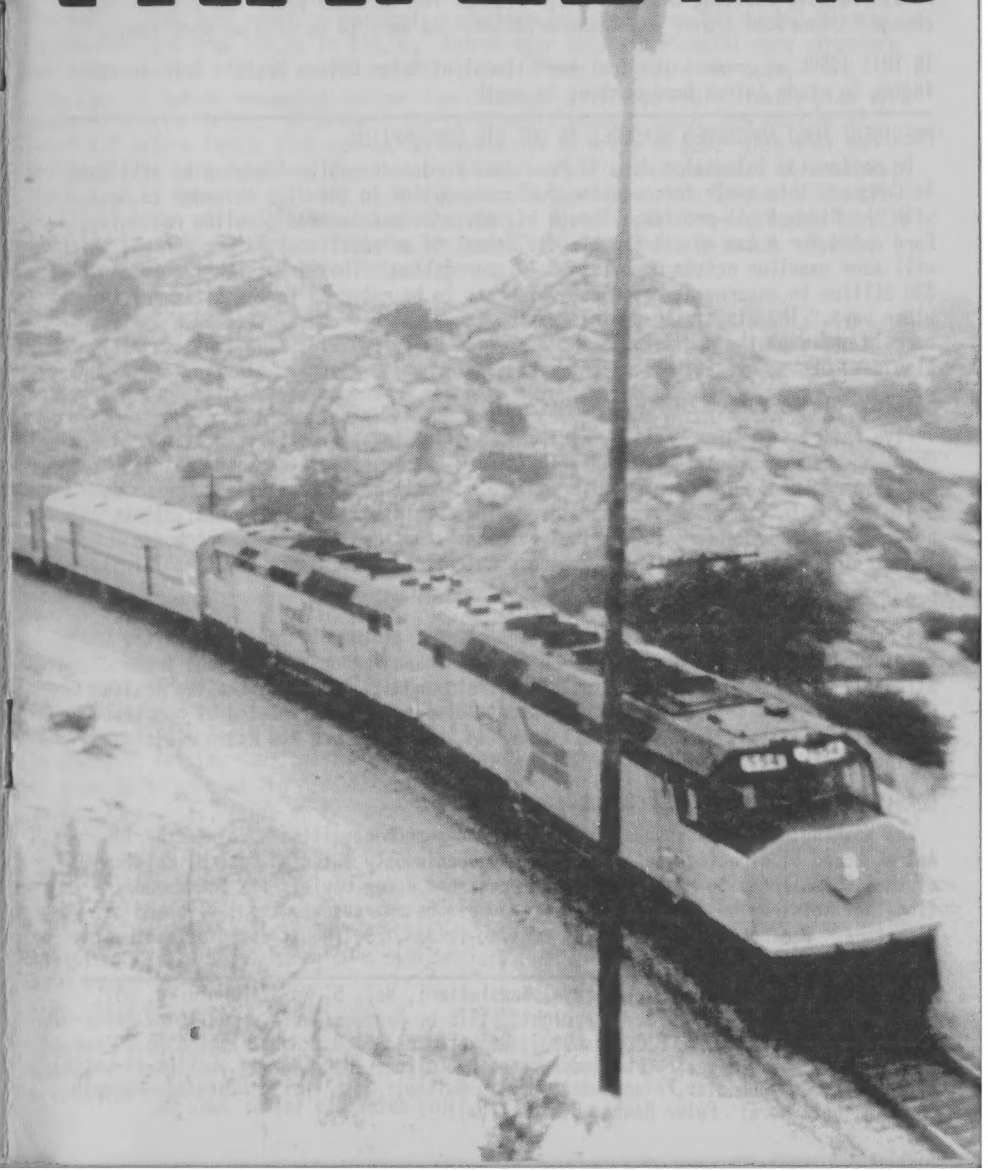
RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

35¢

VOL.5 NO. 1
FIRST ISSUE OF
JANUARY 1975
#99



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ON THE COVER

We open the new year with another of our series of photos depicting the beauties of rail travel. This time it's the COAST STARLIGHT, photographed by Mike Jarel. On a November day, the northbound train in Santa Susana Pass in Southern California moves along between the second and third tunnels, where passengers get a final glimpse of the San Fernando Valley and the Los Angeles area. Mike's original shot was a 35mm color slide.

WELCOME TO THE FIRST ISSUE OF RAIL TRAVEL NEWS. As announced previously, we have changed our name from Rail Travel Newsletter to Rail Travel News. Also new with this issue is our subscription rate of $8.00 per year, for 24 twice-monthly issues by first class mail, 35¢ per copy. Back issues are still available at their old rate. We have exciting changes in RTN planned for this new year, the year of big change in American travel and transportation. Be sure to be with us each issue.

IN THIS ISSUE we present the next installment of Peter Putnam Bretz's trip to Washington to study Amtrak headquarters in depth.

PRESIDENT FORD ANNOUNCES MEASURES TO CUT OIL CONSUMPTION

On nationwide television Jan. 13 President Ford made public the plan he will send to Congress this month for reducing fuel consumption in the U.S. in order to deal with the Mideast oil problem. Though his advisors recommended gasoline rationing, Ford opted for a tax on oil imports, to amount to an additional $3 per barrel, which will send gasoline prices up by about 10¢ per gallon. The tax will bring in about $30 billion in government revenues, which are to be returned to the citizenry in other ways. The aim of the administration is to cut oil consumption by a million barrels daily by the end of 1975 and 2 million daily by 1977. The fuel tax will also mean higher utility bills for users.

RAILROAD STRIKE SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 24

Five railroads--Union Pacific, Missouri Pacific, Texas & Pacific, Baltimore & Ohio, and Seaboard Coast Lines--will be struck by members of the Sheet Metal Workers Union on Jan. 24 if contract issues are not settled by that time. The roads would be completely shut down, as other unions would honor picket lines. It is not yet clear what effect the strike would have on other railroads, which are threatening to boycott the union in the event of a strike.

NEW YORK COMMUTER TRAIN CRASH INJURES 201

A Penn Central commuter train struck the rear of another in the Bronx on the morning of Jan. 2. Reports blamed the crash on human error. The second train allegedly ran a red signal and struck the train ahead. Together, the two trains were carrying about 1600 passengers. About 201 persons were treated at hospitals, most with relatively minor effects. Power on the Harlem and New Haven divisions of the PC was cut off for two hours after the accident.

COMMITTEE SELECTS PAUL REISTRUP AS NEW AMTRAK HEAD

The Washington Star-News has reported that a search committee appointed by the Amtrak board of directors met on Jan. 7 and unanimously selected Paul H. Reistrup of the ICG Railroad to replace retiring president Roger Lewis. Its recommendation that Reistrup be offered the position must be approved by the full board of directors. The board's next regular meeting is Jan. 29, tho it could call a meeting sooner if it wished.

Rail Travel News (formerly Rail Travel Newsletter), Vol. 5, No. 1 (Whole No. 99), First Issue of January, 1975. Copyright © 1975 by Message Media. Published twice monthly by Message Media, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Subscription $8.00 per year; single copy 35¢. STAFF: James Russell, Editor; Paul Rayton, Editor-at-Large; Regional Correspondents: Peter Putnam Bretz, Malibu; Jack Ferry, Chicago; Kenneth Maylath, Baltimore; Peter Roehm, Boston. Mailing date this issue: Jan. 16.

AMTRAK ANNOUNCES LOWER FARES IN WEST, EXTENSION OF FAMILY FARES

In a Jan. 14 press release Amtrak announced that effective Feb. 1 thru June 11 it is establishing an experimental excursion fare on West Coast routes to stimulate off-peak and leisure travel on routes between Seattle and San Diego. The roundtrip excursion fares are to run 22% below regular fares. On the San Francisco-Seattle rum, for example, the reduction is 17%, while on the Seattle-Portland route it amounts to 31% off present fares. The restrictions on the excursion fare are that trips must be roundtrip by coach, and the return trip must start 7-21 days after the day of leaving. No stopovers are allowed, and additional discounts are allowed only for children. The time restriction does not apply on the Portland-Tacoma or Seattle route.

Examples of fare reductions are: S.F.-Seattle, from $94.50 to $78; L.A.-Seattle, from $128.50 to $98; S.F.-San Diego, from $6050 to $49.50; S.F.-Portland, from $80 to $64. The Seattle-Portland corridor roundtrip excursion fare goes from $18 to $12.50, and Tacoma-Portland from $14.50 to $10.50. Amtrak said this experimental fare structure would be examined with an eye to extending it to other routes in the east.

On Jan. 13 Amtrak announced another fare savings: effective Feb. 1 family plan will apply to shorter trips. At present the basic adult one-way coach fare must be at least $30 before family plan can apply; next month it drops to $20. This will be applicable to both coach and first class travel, on all Amtrak routes. For example, the L.A.-S.F. fare for a family of four (with a 2-year old and an 11-year old) will be $11.55 lower on family plan. A similar family traveling Boston-Washington DC will find the train $9.50 cheaper than the bus and $79.50 less than air coach. Family plan applies any day except for tripsbeginning on Friday or Sunday.

AMTRAK REGIONAL TIMETABLES APPEAR

Amtrak issued four regional timetables bearing the Dec. 15 date: for West Coast; New York-Albany-Buffalo-Detroit; Chicago-Seattle; and Chicago-California. The main motive for publishing these schedules seems to have been to change the sample fares which in most cases are considerably higher than those shown in the previous timetables. The New York-Albany-Buffalo-Detroit schedule, however, seems to be an exact duplicate of the Oct. 31 folder, except that the limits of baggage liability have been changed. The West Coast schedule indicates "Complete Dining and Beverage Service" on the SAN JOAQUIN, instead of "Light Meal and Beverage Service," and the changed Greyhound connection times at Bakersfield is listed. There appear to be no other significant time changes in the four timetables.

PRO-TRANSIT GOVERNORS TAKE OFFICE

California, the state that could not find enough money to finance part of the SAN JOAQUIN, but had to find help at the federal level to reinstate the run, this month has a governor who will apparently be more at ease with publicly-funded rail service. Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr., installed Jan. 6, has gone on record as being in favor of rapid transit and downplaying of highways. In Massachusetts, Gov. Michael S. Dukakis, setting the tone for his new "people's administration," will continue to commute to work on the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority's Green Line. And to head the state Office of Transportation and Construction Dukakis chose Frederick P. Salvucci, a 34-year old anti-highway, public transportation-minded advisor.

COMMUTER FARE RISES DELAYED

The Illinois Commerce Commission has delayed until March 14 a 15% fare increase on Burlington Northern's commuter trains scheduled to take effect Nov. 15. It likewise delayed until March 30 a similar fare hike on Milwaukee Road, which would have gone into effect Dec. 1.

AUTO-TRAIN GRANTED ICC EXEMPTIONS

Auto-Train Corporation hasbeen granted exemptions by the ICC which would have required it to accept credit cards, and approved the corporation's mandatory 30-day prepayment requirement. The exemptions were effective Dec. 11.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY'S STATEMENT ON PASSENGER SERVICE CHANGES

(Following is the text of a press release from non-Amtrak Southern Railways, Dec. 18, explaining its decision to continue running passenger trains outside the Amtrak system, while trimming back its service:)

Southern has determined that it will continue with relatively minor modification the two passenger trains which this year accounted for over 90% of its total passenger volume and revenue.

Southern's most important and premier train, the SOUTHERN CRESCENT, which provides sleeping and coach accommodations between Washington and New Orleans, with thru sleeping cars between New York and Los Angeles thru Amtrak connecting services, will definitely be continued. This service is presently operated on a daily basis between Washington and Birmingham and a tri-weekly basis between Birmingham and New Orleans. Patronage between Washington and Atlanta is sufficient to justify a daily service, but between Atlanta and Birmingham this is not the case; in spite of the gasoline shortage, an average of less than 31 passengers per trip were carried on the entire train between Atlanta and Birmingham on the four days each week when the train did not operate beyond Birmingham. It is accordingly proposed to operate the SOUTHERN CRESCENT south of Atlanta on a tri-weekly basis and north of Atlanta on a daily basis. The only change being made, therefore, is in the reduction of the service between Atlanta and Birmingham from a daily to a tri-weekly basis. Incidentally, this is the basis on which Amtrak would have operated the train all along if Southern had joined Amtrak in 1971.

Southern's second train is the PIEDMONT, which currently operates on a daily basis between Atlanta and Washington. Because of the distance traveled, this requires inconvenient departure and arrival times at Washington that make connections to the north relatively inconvenient. Experience over the last several years has shown that the utilization of this train south of Charlotte has been extremely light. The average number of passengers carried on the entire train south of Charlotte in the first 9 months of 1974 was only 16.2 per trip and 85% of the passenger miles attributed to the train have occurred between Charlotte and Washington. By discontinuing the train south of Charlotte, therefore, the schedules can be changed so as to provide far better connections at Washington with New York and intermediate points as well as more convenient arrival and departure times for the Virginia and North Carolina cities for which this train provides a real service.

Southern's remaining 2 trains which are proposed to be discontinued accounted for less than 2% of Southern's total passenger volume and revenues this year. These trains are a tri-weekly Salisbury-Asheville, NC train and a Washington-Lynchburg daily train which have been so lightly used that they should have been dropped years ago, but were required to be continued until the end of 1974 because of the "freeze" provisions of the Amtrak legislation. Accordingly, steps are being taken to discontinue these trains effective the end of January. That these trains do no provide any real public service is indicated by the fact that, during the first 9 months of 1974, the average number of people riding the Asheville trains was only 17.1 per trip--no more than could be carried in a small bus. (When the Salisbury-Asheville, NC trains have been discontinued, Southern will provide week-end and holiday excursion trains for sightseeing during the summer and autumn between Asheville and Old Fort, NC.) On Trains 7 & 8 the figures are almost the same--an average per trip of 17.8 persons--and these patrons will be able to use the remaining 2 pairs of trains which Southern will continue to operate between Washington and Lynchburg.

In all cases these figures exclude special short-haul groups such as school children who occasionally ride between adjacent stations on these trains in connection with school outings and the like. This service, however, will continue to be made available by special trains which Southern has used for this purpose elsewhere and plans to operate over all these routes from time to time.

If Southern had joined Amtrak, neither of the two trains proposed to be discontinued nor the PIEDMONT, which is now proposed to be continued over most of its route on an improved schedule, would have been operated at all. Amtrak would have operated only the SOUTHERN CRESCENT on a daily basis to Atlanta and on a tri-weekly basis on to New Orleans, and would, in line with its policy as applied to other similar trains, have eliminated many of the intermediate stops such as Anniston, Ala., which these trains now make and will continue to make.

Southern plans to continue indefinitely in the passenger business with the SOUTHERN CRESCENT and the PIEDMONT, but it can afford to do this only if it is permitted to eliminate those services which experience has shown are not either needed or used by the public.

***

Southern's proposed revised schedule for the PIEDMONT, to take effect Jan. 31 unless the ICC says no, involves a 1-hr later departure from all points; it will leave Washington DC at 10:45am and reach Charlotte, NC at 8pm. Northbound it leaves Charlotte at 10am (instead of 12:49pm) and reaches Washington at 7:25pm instead of 10:15. Southern said that in the first 9 months of 1974 it lost $188,900 on trains 7 & 8, $113,900 on trains 3 & 4, and on the portions of the PIEDMONT and the CRESCENT to be eliminated it claimed a loss of $223,700 and $261,400 respectively. The changes for interstate trains require ICC approval, and approval of state regulatory agencies in the case of intrastate service.

Urban-Suburban Transit

SMALL MONORAIL SYSTEM to link 2 sections of a Honolulu shopping center is planned for operation in 1975. The 4-car train will hold 64 passengers... SELECTED BY UMTA as sites for a new Transit Market Project are Baltimore, MD and Nashville, TN... THE FOURTH OF 25 sections for the Second Avenue subway project in New York City is now under construction. The 14.3-mile route should be opened in 1981. Gotham has also received a $51 million grant to build 2.5 miles of subway route on the Archer line... PHILADELPHIA WILL PROCEED with a high speed rail transit line project to the city's airport, following receipt of a $30 million UMTA grant. The new line has been designated a Bicentennial project... TRACKLAYING IS PROCEEDING on the Washington DC metro project, and delivery of cars is proceeding after first deliveries in September. The 80mph equipment hit 55mph on the Rohr test track at Winder, GA. Some 556 cars are expected at $400,000 per unit... DESIGN WORK ON improvements for the Erie Lackawanna commuter service are going ahead following an UMTA grant of $3.3 million for planning and design. It is anticipated that the electrified zone will be extended from Dover to Netcong, and the power system converted to a more modern type and voltage level. Some 200 new air-conditioned cars are expected... CONGRESSIONAL TASK FORCE this month called for more public service jobs to help the economy, and recommended that the flow of federal funds for mass transit, among other projects, be speeded up to create new work... A SECRET STUDY not yet released is highly critical of BART's car maintenance program, reports the Oakland (CA) Tribune. The document, being prepared by a San Francisco consulting firm, said to be of "major importance" to BART's future, contends, among other points, that the system's tracks and stations are over-maintained while its cars are getting much less maintenance than necessary... THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC, waiting for its requested 111% fare increase on its San Francisco commuter runs to be acted upon by the state Public Utilities Commission, on Jan. 10 asked the PUC for an interim immediate 20% fare rise... NEW COMMUTER LOCOMOTIVES, SP 3197-3199, called GP40P-2 models, are joining the SDP-45's in SP's commuter service. The 3 new locos, the first passenger units since the SDP-45's came in 1967, are 16 feet tall, or 2 inches taller than a Budd dome coach... TWO TV STATIONS in Los Angeles, the CBS and NBC outlets, gave prime time editorials against use of SP tracks for Southern Calif. commuter runs, after the railroad contacted them and persuaded them to voice opposition to the often-mentioned plan...

Mixed Train of Thoughts

ILLINOIS CENTRAL GULF executive Paul Reistrup, offered the Amtrak presidency but leery of taking a big pay cut to $60,000 per year, has been receiving pleas from many quarters to take the job anyway on grounds that his nation and the rail industry needs Reistrup badly. Before Christmas, conductors on the ICG commuter trains that Reistrup rides to and from work personally asked him to take the job ..... CAN A LEOPARD change its spots department: speaking at the San Francisco Commonwealth Club luncheon Dec. 6, in the q-&-a exchange following his prepared remarks, BN chairman Lou Menk had this to say about Amtrak: "I don't find a need for long-run passenger trains in this country." Brother Lou said that on-time performance was improving, but that Amtrak would never be profitable (next question, please)..... NORTH COAST HIAWATHA west from Chicago Dec. 21 lost its diner at Minneapolis because of defective brakes (one report said a disc had fallen from the truck) and the train proceeded, passengers being fed by Colonel Sanders at Fargo and Billings. A diner deadheaded from Seattle to Spokane was added to the consist there..... BRITISH RAIL PLANS to raise its passenger fares about 12.5% on Jan. 26 to help offset increasing deficits due to inflation. An equivalent of $94 million additional revenue is expected to offset losses expected to exceed the $350 million estimated for 1974. Short distance fares will be raised more than 12.5%, and sleepers will also become more expensive..... THE RUMOR MILL: Service thru Boise, Idaho over the CITY OF PORTLAND route of UP is now rumored to begin anytime from Feb. thru Sept. 1975, depending on which Amtrak source one talks with. It is also felt now that the run will originate in Seattle as a thru train at least to Ogden, replacing one of the Seattle-Portland corridor runs. Some rumors say the Boise service will be extended east over the Oregon Short Line via Kemmerer to Granger, WY, and thence to Denver, possibly linking up with the extended NATIONAL LIMITED, now planned to run into Denver from the east. If inaugurated, a true transcontinental service would be formed. A lesser plan would be to terminate the Boise train at Denver and require passengers to change trains in the Mile-High city..... AMTRAK HAS APPARENTLY given up on plans to cut the EMPIRE BUILDER to 4 trips weekly as an economy measure. Thought had also been given to cutting COAST STARLIGHT and SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR runs to tri-weekly in the off season. There was also a plan to cut at least one round trip from the Seattle-Portland schedule, now also "inoperative".....

* * *

THE WIND THAT blew the Milwaukee Road freight cars from the Columbia River bridge at Beverly, WA on Dec. 21 was blowing up to 110mph. One of the container vans found in the wreckage had been blown from the bridge the night before, as a westbound train crossed. This was not discovered until cleanup operations were well underway at the site..... AMTRAK'S ANNUAL REPORT to Congress is due to be submitted on Feb. 15..... A STUDY BY Arthur D. Little Inc. of Cambridge, MA calls for eventual electrification of U.S. rail lines, which energy shortages may well bring about. The study says that modern solid state control devices make possible the use of ac rather than dc current, so special generating plants are not required. Also, electric locos are cheaper to build and maintain than diesels...

SP STEAM LOCOMOTIVE 4449 was moved from a Portland, OR park to the 9th Street roundhouse for restoration on Dec. 14. The "Daylight" loco will be painted red, white and blue and used to power the American Freedom Train in April. The engine had sat in Oaks Park since 1958, when it was donated by SP to the city.....
THE LAS VEGAS CELEBRITY TRAIN was to run again Jan. 10, after the Dec. 6 run was cancelled (it did operate Dec. 13). Rumors are that financial problems of the train promoters were responsible for cutting the "Lost Wages" train schedule. The fare has been increased from $69.95 to $79.95, but now includes two midnight shows.....

(continued on page 18)

Rail Canada

CN IS CIRCULATING a beautiful new "accommodations" booklet, graced by a four-color photo of a transcontinental passenger train in Yellowhead Pass near the Alberta-British Columbia border. Evidently the CN passenger marketing department neither knows nor cares about Ottawa's plans to phase out sleeping cars in Canada, as much of the booklet is devoted to describing the various types of sleeping accommodations. Bedrooms are now divided into two types: the "mini" type bedroom is what has been known as "bed lengthwise" of car; and the "sofa" type was formerly known as "bed crosswise. The ex-Milwaukee Road full domes are described as having bar and lounge on the upper level, takeout and dining area on the lower level. The image of a "Skyview" (ex-Milwaukee) lounge observation area has been dropped.

CN PASSENGER PROMOTION in Toronto over the holidays: Extra trains were operated thru to Montreal, but John Noel, manager of CN public relations, told the Toronto Star: "The chances are 9 out of 10 that you won't get reservations. But the reservations are computerized and if there's a cancellation the next person to call gets the ticket." Business was spurred by a strike of maintenance workers at the Montreal Dorval airport. They delayed snow removal which caused CP Air to cancel its Montreal service.

TORONTO STAR COLUMNIST Harry Bruce, in an item entitled "On a train, a guy can fall in love," concluded by saying: "Ottawa is the city in which men like Jack Pickersgill (former CTC president) suggest that, even if the trains never run again, Canadians will not give a damn. One trouble with Ottawa is that its most powerful men spend so much time in the air they lose their feeling for the country. On airplanes, people simply haven't the time to fall in love. Not even with Canada."

CN OFFICIALS WERE unable to offer explanations for why an eastbound CN freight was proceeding on the westbound main near Napanee, Ontario prior to a head-on collision with a westbound CN passenger train Dec. 20. Some 40 of the 150 passengers aboard were hurt, only 4 seriously. Some passengers suffered heart attacks in the wreck. Rescue efforts were hampered by knee-deep snow. One of the two dead was a crewman on the passenger engine. The freight loco was twisted 180° and the passenger unit overturned. Witnesses said that the collapse of the baggage car behind the passenger unit absorbed much of the impact, and helped keep injuries down in the four trailing coaches and the bar car. Rail workers reported no hysteria. A three-car RDC train was sent from Belleville, a division point on the Montreal-Toronto line, to pick up passengers who wishedto continue their journey by train.

In other train wreck news, a radio report heard in the U.S. on Jan. 1 said that CN had suffered another head-on collision at Blue River, B.C.--a freight train and the SUPER CONTINENTAL, with 2 people dead. That makes the third head-on involving a CN passenger train in the last several months: September at Kamloops; December at Kingston, Ont.; and the recent report from Blue River.

On Canadian Pacific, the main line route of the CANADIAN was blocked on Dec. 22 by derailment of 19 cars of a westbound CP coal train at Moberly, B.C., near the Alberta-B.C. border. No injuries were reported.

MORE BAD NEWS is reported by insiders on the Ottawa plan to eliminate the present transcontinental passenger runs on CN and CP Rail, replacing them with inter-city day runs along the route. The plan has progressed beyond the talking stage, and implementation planning is underway. One possible drawback may be opposition in the 4 western provinces. Public hearings, if held, may also slow or stall the plan.

THE PRINCESS MARGUERITE looks destined to return to her Seattle-Victoria run in the summer of 1975, under circumstances not yet fully clarified. One Victoria official was heard to say recently in a private aside: "You don't have to worry about the "Marguerite." She'll be on the run this summer for certain." Best bet now is that the B.C. government will pick up the full bill for the service. Unless there is a change in the situation, look for a May, 1975 startup date.

Inside Amtrak Headquarters

by Peter Putnam Bretz

Wednesday, November 20, 1974, was a warm but bleak afternoon in Washington, D.C., the city of hope and despair. I walked along the complex of buildings that housed the Department of Transportation. There, parked by the curb, was a brand-new Auwarter-Skyliner 9900 European built double-decker bus. It was painted in the colors of the Los Angeles Rapid Transit District. Hope for the future? And what hope was there for railroading in this post-Watergate, energy crisis-filled age?

A corner turned, a block walked and steps climbed, and I stood in the center of L'Enfant Plaza. A gigantic fountain--nicely design -ed, centers things and is faced off by the large Plaza Hotel. The fountain is flanked by two identical eight-story office buildings. One is numbered 955. These are modern large structures, lots of glass, but plenty of "building" too--pinkish, actually. The prices at the L'Enfant Plaza Hotel start at around $40.00 single. Number 955 is called the Amtrak Building, although it houses the Boeing Company, a Christian service organization, and various other concerns. NRPC occupies most of the top four floors. There are wide, tree-lined sidewalks and lots of people coming and going.

I stand there awhile, looking up at the building. I can see office workers busily going about their duties--the floor length glass shows every detail. Is the man up there on the phone deciding future Amtrak policy? Or selecting a new train route? Does he know that the FLORIDIAN went off the track again the other night? I collect my thoughts: Well, Pete, it's now or never. I push the revolving door and walk to the self-service elevator banks. Press button 8. Up we go to Headquarters Floor, and the door opens. Right outside the glass entrance is a timetable rack. Ah, yes, let's see what goodies await us. Here's one on the new Detroit service. I pick up three or four others and stuff them in my jacket pocket.

The receptionist is on the phone: "Good Morning, Amtrak. Just a moment,"--she buzzes an office. "Yes sir, can I help you?" I ask to see the VP in charge of Public Relations, stating I don't have an appointment, but he's expecting me. "Alright sir, would you please sign our guest register and have a seat?" I place my name at the bottom of the page of signatures for the day, noticing that a man from Sacramento signed in earlier. The girl tells me that Mr. Edel is in a meeting right now, but someone from Public Relations will be out to see me shortly.

I stroll over to the window and glance down on the fountain. Pretty from up here. I can just make out the Potomac River about a half-mile away. I wonder what corporation is in the other plaza building across from us here? I never did check. Presently: "Hello, Mr. Bretz? I'm Jim Bryant, Public Relations. Won't you come on in." Wonderful. I now enter the inner sanctum of Amtrak to observe and compare.

Coming into Mr. Bryant's office, the first thing I see is a little HO model of a Metroliner car sitting on his desk. "Adds a little

(continued on page 13)

WEEKEND WRAP-UP IN THE NORTHEAST CORRIDOR - 1974

by Pete Roehm and Dave Foley

The last weekend of the year found us on a three-day weekend visit to "Fun City" and Washington via three varieties of Northeast Corridor conveyance: the Turbo, the Metroliner, and a sleeping car accommodation on the NIGHT OWL.

Saturday afternoon found us venturing out to our waiting Turbo, train 152, the YANKEE CLIPPER, ahead of the crowd so that we might position ourselves behind the engineer for the run to Gotham, and this we did do successfully. The upper level on the front end for this run was the coach arrangement. Two weeks earlier, on a return evening run from seeing the Metropolitan Opera in New York, the forward section was arranged as a lounge (that run was on time to the minute).

The run south was routine, on time, and at three points the needle exceeded the one hundred point. Ninety and more was maintained at numerous points along the way altho the ride was not what one would call smooth. The worst showing in time/speed was that section from the Grand Central cutoff into Penn Station which, if it could be straightened out in some fashion and the station stops of Old Saybrook, Kingston, and Westerly eliminated, might cut enough time off the present schedule to give the Turbo a three and one-half hour running time.

That evening found us at the Waldorf Astoria, dinner at Mamma Leone's, and the film, "Murder on the Orient Express." This film is a must for all rail buffs as well as whodunnit buffs; there is much rail footage both interior and exterior. Just a pleasant film.

Sunday afternoon put us in the Amtrak lounge on the lower level of Penn Station, and the woman in charge was having her problems with BROADWAY LIMITED passengers. Seems that all westbound passengers that day had to take a special train to Philadelphia for an across-the-platform transfer to the regular BROADWAY as it had terminated in Philly that morning due to a derailment (apparently not that of the BROADWAY the day before, but of a freight). Then aboard our MetroClub car for lazy leisure on train 121 to Washington with intermediate stops of Newark, Philly, Wilmington, Baltimore, and the Beltway. The car was still in original Penn Central, but clean and comfortable and the ride not as bad as it had been a year or so earlier and certainly smoother than the Turbo. A couple of slow orders held us off schedule so that we did not arrive in DC until about 15 minutes after the advertised. The airline-style food was better than many airlines but a far cry from what one would hope would be available.

Washington was warm, the Union Station's interior was gutted thru the floor for the a-building Visitor Center, the still-being-constructed subway continues to have the traffic patterns all snarled. Our visit the next day to Amtrak's Travel Office on 'K' Street found it much more pleasant than many of the local airline offices both in decor and service. The balance of the day was spent at the Smithsonian before our NIGHT OWL departure at ten-thirty.

Our bedroom, 'D', on one of two sleepers this evening (normally there is just a lounge-sleeper) was clean but showing its age. The ride was generally smooth, altho we did not retire until after New York preferring to chat awhile on many topics including the delightful literary accomplishment of one Ernest Malcolm Frimbo. Asleep, finally, we missed (unbeknown to us) by three hours a lengthy delay that was brought about that morning at Bridgeport when an electric commuter derailed and brought down a crossarm and accompanying catenary. The NIGHT OWL arrived in South Station on time, fairly full including many from the PIEDMONT connection (4 F-units plus several coaches) which will soon be cut back to Charlotte on the south. No real complaints on the NIGHT OWL as we found it acceptable under all criteria and had a very pleasant porter, reminding us of earlier days in sleeping cars.

THE DECEMBER DERAILMENT OF THE BROADWAY

As reported here last issue, the BROADWAY LIMITED derailed on Dec. 28 at Thompsontown, Pennsylvania on its eastbound trip between Chicago and New York. More details are now available, as well as the accompanying photo, reprinted courtesy of the Harrisburg, PA Patriot-News.

The derailment occurred at 8:48am on a curve a mile east of Thompsontown. The train was traveling at 55mph, top speed for the curve, when, according to a railroad spokeman, a split rail gave way and the train left the tracks. The spokesman said the rail split vertically, causing thetrain's wheels to drop off onto the ties.. The train was running over 3 hours late at the time of the derailment.

There were 430 passengers aboard the 17-car train. Buses were called up from Harrisburg to take them on from the scene. Of the 430, somewhat more than 40 recieved injuries, apparently not serious. Newspaper interviews with passengers after the wreck indicated that they were in good spirits. For example, one rider was asked if she would take a plane next time. Her reply was, "No way. At least when you're in a train wreck you live to tell about it."

Thirteen cars derailed and 4 of them remained upright. The others leaned against an embankment which prevented them from turning over. We have identified some of the derailed cars, as follows: Amtrak # 3410 club car, 8800-8801 twin-unit diner, 2233 "Sebring" sleeper, 2551 "Times Square" sleeper, 2554 "Golden Triangle" sleeper; and of the Washington section on the rear of the train: 3253 "City of Cleveland" sleepr, 6008 and 6044 coaches.

For the westbound train that evening, Amtrak scraped together the following cars to replace the derailed consist: Amtrak 1042 baggage; PC 7542 baggage; Amtrak 2005 slumbercoach (Washington section); Amtrak 2025 "Loch Leven" slumbercoach; PC coaches 1429, 1403, 1408 and Amtrak 6029; Amtrak 3371 lounge (Army Hospital car); twin-unit diner Amtrak 8806-8807; Amtrak sleepers 2683; 2293; 2811 "Pearl River" (from Washington); and Amtrak coaches 5415, 6437, and 7001, all from Washington. Car 2005 was deadheaded on the Washington section and not occupied before arrival in Harrisburg, where it was switched to the front of the train. The train was pulled by Amtrak diesels 590 and 592. Bill Staiger assisted with this report.

—Sunday Patriot-News Photo by Francis Smith

REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY in the Chicago area has at long last chosen a leader. He is Milton Pikarsky, who is chairman of the Chicago Transit Authority board. The news of the appointment came just after the opening of the new year..... UNITED STATES RAILWAY Association, or ConRail, which is to look after reorganization of the Northeast railroads, on Dec. 20 elected Arthur D. Lewis as Chairman of the Board of Incorporators. He is also chairman of the Board of Directors..... AMTRAK EMPLOYEES ARE now permitted to ride at reduced rates on railroads in several foreign countries--including Great Britain, Denmark, Germany, Portugal, Sweden and Peru..... AMTRAK RADIO ADS appeared in Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Detroit, Chicago, New York, Washington DC, Carbondale and Springfield IL between Dec. 16 & 22, featuring "Amtrak's roving reporter," Paul Anthony, advising potential riders to make plans early.....

ELLA GRASSO, FIRST woman Governor elected in her own right, without having her husband serve before her (Connecticut) arrived for her swearing-in ceremonies this month at Hartford via Amtrak. She traveled by RDC from her home in Windsor Locks to Hartford via train, and a nationally distributed picture showed her at the station in Hartford, with the RDC visible in the background. One of her first acts as governor was to instruct the Connecticut DOT to get rid of its airplane, which was bought within the last two years at a cost of several hundred thousand dollars..... AND GOVERNOR CAREY of New York, along the same lines, took his family from New York, where he lives, to Albany via chartered Trailways bus. The Careys have 12 children. A nationally distributed picture showed them at the door of the bus, with the Silver Eagle emblem visible in the background.....

CANADIAN TRANSPORT COMMISSION'S Systems Analysis & Research Data Base Branch has just completed a study of "Amtrak's Effectiveness." A copy just reached our hands at press time, and we are able only to give it brief mention here (look for more next issue). The 193-page report concludes as follows:

"What are the implications for Canada of these findings and conclusions? One implication is that if Amtrak's capital acquisition program is carried out as planned, then the United States will have a rail passenger system far superior to Canada's by 1978. To the many Canadians who now take pride in the fact that Canada's rail passenger system is superior to that in the United States, 1978 will not be a happy year. Furthermore, if Amtrak's estimate of its FY1978 deficit is at all accurate and, if Canada's passenger train subsidies continue to increase at about the same rate as they have in the past, it is likely that Canada will be paying more for its 80% subsidy program than the United States will be paying for Amtrak...

"Finally, the findings and conclusions of this study do not seem to indicate that Amtrak, in its present form, is an appropriate model for Canada. Amtrak was, and is, a pragmatic compromise developed within the larger United States context of bankrupt railroads owned by successful holding companies. Canada, with a program of 80% subsidy and a Crown Corporation in railroading, has an institutional context quite different from the United States--and perhaps even more complex. Certainly, further study of institutional arrangements for providing future rail passenger service in Canada is required."

YOU JUST CAN'T make a mistake in RTN: "Bois de Sioux River," ex-GN 1951 EMPIRE BUILDER sleeper, originally built with sections, was one of 16, not 15 cars as Peter Bretz reported in his 2nd December RTN article. The 16th car was SP&S "Snake River," the only one of the series to carry an oddball number--702. The others were 1260-1274. Only five of the 16 lost sections in favor of additional bedrooms. GN added 3, rather than 4 bedrooms..... AMTRAK SCHEDULE CHANGES on the Coast Route are looking more probable. Amtrak now definitely wants to get the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL south from Vancouver B.C. no earlier than 7am. During the period late February to late April, when the U.S. will be on Daylight time and Canada on Standard time, Amtrak will operate a chartered bus to make connections with the southbound COAST STARLIGHT at Seattle. It is expected that the COAST STARLIGHT will operate 30 minutes later southbound; and that the SOUTHWEST LIMITED will operate 30 minutes later east from Los Angeles, to make a reliable connection and to improve the eastbound time at Kansas City..... A FREIGHT DERAILMENT on BN ex-GN track near Gold Bar, Washington Jan. 10 forced the Friday evening depqrture of the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA to be re-routed over ex-NP track via Pasco, Washington east from Seattle..... LOOK FOR A possible schedule change by Canadian National for its SUPER CONTINENTAL runs at Vancouver, B.C., effective with the late April time change. The westbound SUPER will arrive Vancouver about 8am, rather than in the afternoon; and the eastbound is expected to leave 6pm or later, set back from the present mid-afternoon time. CN is said to be planning some major track work on the main line, and the change will allow the SUPER to pass thru the affected area at night, along with all other traffic, to allow maintenance crews several uninterrupted hours of work..... WASHINGTON STAR TRANSPORTATION writer Steve Aug reported Jan. 8 that Paul Reistrup will accept the top post at Amtrak, replacing Roger Lewis, on a guarantee that the Amtrak board members will work to have the $60,000 salary limit raised. There was a special meeting of the board in mid-January, and the appointment was expected to be "sewed up" soon.....

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE we will present our annual Chronology of Rail Travel Events of the past year, plus many other engaging items. Be sure you're on our subscription list to get your issues promptly. Write Message Media-RTN, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Yearly subscription rate is $8.00 in North America.

(continued from page 8)

class, don't you think?" It was a nice touch. "How was your trip across the country?" I was a few minutes into that when a man stuck his head in and asked: "Are you from Rail Travel Newsletter?" "Yes," I said. "Just a minute," and he dashed away. In a minute he was back clutching $7.00 in his fist. "Here, get me a subscription." Well, things starting out brightly. It turned out he was from Amtrak's legal department. Days later, I was sitting in that gentleman's office, conducting an interview, when his secretary brought in the morning's mail and there was his first copy of RTN. Service!

I spent the rest of the afternoon outlining my plans and setting up possible interviews. Mr. Bryant made suggestions of people to see, and it soon became apparent that there were jillions of people throughout the various departments who would be interesting to talk with. A telephone call interrupted us. "That was a fellow from WCKY in Cincinnati, Pete. He wanted to know the status of passenger increases due to the Greyhound strike." It developed that there wasn't much in-crease in the Cincinnati area, but some sections of the country had increases, like the Portland-Seattle corridor. I comment on the large color photo of the French Turbos that's in Mr. Bryant's office. Then he and I took a little tour of the Amtrak Headquarters facilities.

Mostly offices and open desks occupy this eighth floor; the size of the working area determined, not by the importance of a person's work, but his rank. The upper, well-known bosses get generous offices with sofas, etc. I noticed one tiny, cramped work area shared by two men. The job performed is very vital and important to Amtrak passengers. Generally, there seemed to be much activity. Secretaries busily typed, workers scurried here and there. I passed occasional little groups of people standing around discussing railroad topics: "...Bob, the new Metroliner seat designs are creating a problem in that..." I was impressed by the busyness of things. Walking along the green carpet --why, what's this? It was a large cabinet with sliding louvers of built-in glass. "This is our 35mm slide presentation box," said Jim Bryant. He flicked some buttons and turned on a light and out sprang a group of slides, back-lit, showing various scenes of the COAST STARLIGHT. "Whenever we need some photos or someone wants to see what a particular train or area is like, we use this." We walked on. Various people walked by and I was dutifully introduced to all. Handshakes, one or two verbal strokes, then I promptly forgot who they were. If I met any of them later, I didn't remember seeing them in the hall.

Now, at the other end of the building, the carpet color changed from green to gold. "These are the executive offices, Pete." Roger Lewis's office was pointed out. Also the closed doors of the room where the Amtrak Board of Directors was currently meeting. More secretaries and offices now, past a Xerox machine--just like any other corporation. In one place, there is a letter board--showing the telephone calls received each day at all reservation locations. The total for today was about 68,000 calls with about 12% dropped or lost.

We took an elevator down to the 7th, 6th, and 5th floors. These are set up similarly with offices, but large work areas. "Design" occupies most of Amtrak's 6th floor area, "Operations" on the 5th floor. The 7th is being remodeled with bits of carpet, workmen and electric conduit all over the place. Back on the 8th floor, I was introduced

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to Ed Edel, the VP of Public Relations. Sitting on his desk were HO models of two of Amtrak's new SDP40F locos. A picture of the refurbish-ed BROADWAY LIMITED hung in the office. I was pleased to note that the office overlooked the railroad line south out of Washington, where run the Florida trains. "I like to watch 'em pass," said Mr. Edel.

Presently it was after 4:00 and I had to catch a train. "See you in the morning", as I took the elevator down, then an escalator, and came out below the plaza area and walked over to the bus loading zones. After watching many buses go by, but not mine, I gave up and took a taxi. Cab service in Washington goes by zones, and so it's a mere 85¢ from L'Enfant Plaza to WUT. One has to share his taxi with others going in the same direction, though.

Washington Union Terminal. The old streetcar Capitol Transit conduit (center slot) is still in place most of the way around the station plaza. Cabs and buses everywhere. The imposing station facade still proclaims: "The Desert Shall Rejoice and Blossom as the Rose" (Isaiah 35:1), and "The Truth Shall Make You Free" (John 8:32). Thoughts for the future as I hurried into the vast waiting room area. Not much place to sit, however, as the great hole for the visitor center dominates. Off to the left, near the ticket windows, I notice the television screen listing arriving trains on one side, departing trains on the other. Very convenient. It showed the 4:50 departures of the BLUE RIDGE, 5:00 METROLINER, 5:00 B&O Brunswick local, 5:05 MONTREALER, 5:05 Baltimore express, 5:25 B&O Brunswick express, 5:40 Penn Central Baltimore local, etc. The lights were flashing on the 4:50, 5:00, 5:05 departures as ready to load. I checked the track number then out into the cold concourse and the train gate. After the gateman inspected my ticket, I walked out a long wooden walkway. This is to skirt the additional construction here of the new subway system--the Metro. Up onto high-level platforms and into the 5:00 Metroliner. I selected car #830, a non-smoker. It's been two years since my last Metroliner ride, but I'll ride plenty of them in the next couple of weeks. We whisk out of Washington and I check out the passenger cars and engines there in the yards. Good to see those Southern green E units again. Rough track around the Capitol Beltway area, but we bounced through the Baltimore tunnels and I alighted at the first stop on time. Staying with a friend and commuting the 40 miles each way to Washington was cheaper than staying in, say, the L'Enfant Plaza Hotel.

Thursday, November 21st--I took the 8:58 Metroliner to Washington, the first Amtrak train available. A quick taxi ride and I was on the 8th floor again, arriving at the reception area just as the morning mail was being delivered. RTN was among the magazines for visitors to peruse. A few minutes later, I was sitting in Jim Bryant's office as he glanced over his copy of RTN. "You'd be surprised, Pete, how many people here at Amtrak read and seriously consider items brought up in your publication." With that happy start, I talked with Jim at some length about the ins and outs of the corporation.

Of course the big news of the day was that Roger Lewis had submitted his resignation. In terms of a successor, the $60,000 salary is still a limitation, but Congress will hopefully authorize a larger salary soon. Mr. Reistrup and Mr. Cruikshank were mentioned as the leading contenders. Whoever the new president turns out to be, he'll likely bring in some new people--but that's up to him. Amtrak has had several changes in key jobs over the past couple of years. Amtrak has many constituencies: not only the opinions of the traveling public, but also the press, the DOT, and so forth. There is pressure from Congress, railroads, unions. "Amtrak is working to get control of their own show," Mr. Bryant said, "Anything we do is in a fishbowl."

Jim Bryant passed on the then current news about the closing of the Old Saybrook bridge for a few days, and also the announcement of Amtrak's actual acquisition of Penn Central's Beech Grove shops. There were rumors of other facilities being taken over by Amtrak, but nothing definite at the time. The phone rang and interrupted us a few times, and various people stuck their heads in the door with questions and requests. Jim excused himself as he had to get up to "The Hill" for a luncheon date and appointment.

I went to lunch down at the plaza cafeteria with a gentleman from Marketing. So far, Amtrak looked to me like the typical big company with typical problems and successes. The main impression was that everyone was always loaded with work. Yet, time was to be set aside to answer my questions and to explain Amtrak, as Mr. Bryant had done this morning. My schedule called next for a close look at the Operations department, in which I was very interested.

On a typical day at Amtrak headquarters, Pete Bretz would be deluged with a sea of facts and opinions. The DOT is anxious to electrify the line to Boston within 5 years... It is possible to carry more people in each coach without crowding by improving restroom and seat design... Amtrak is interested in public tests of the Canadian LRC train, but there are some design problems, mainly with couplers... Some railroads are deteriorating in spite of big profits.. Over the next 5 years, a rough estimate is that Congress will probably make major changes in Amtrak; they may act for a continuation of profit, or grant the corporation funds, vs. loan guarantees (after all, grants go to air traffic control, highways, etc.; balanced spending insures balanced transportation)... Estimates vary from 3 to 72 million dollars to improve Boston-Chicago ex-NYC track to get it up to a fast schedule...

He was then faced with the formidable task of putting all his facts, opinions and impressions together into a cohesive and meaningful report on the inside workings of the NRPC. "We were very open with Pete," said an Amtrak man. Some things Pete was told cannot be published--it's always that way with the news media. Some things can be said only indirectly. All in all, Pete got a very candid look at the rail corporation, and we're anxious to hear and report more of his sea of information (he's now at work putting together the rest of his huge array of notes and transcriptions). Look for the next part of his story in the next issue of RTN.

WESTERN REGIONAL DIRECTOR of Amtrak, Arthur Lloyd, was among Amtrak brass attending a recent policy planning meeting in the Northwest to consider service changes. Getting top attention was a plan to change the COAST STARLIGHT schedule by operating one hour later southbound, leaving Seattle at 12:20pm, and also perhaps one hour earlier northbound, leaving Los Angeles 9am and arriving Seattle 4:20pm. This would be primarily to improve the schedule of the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL, which despite its shortcomings, is providing about 25% of the STARLIGHT loadings at Seattle. When the U.S. goes to Daylight time Feb. 23, the P.I. will once again leave Vancouver B.C. at 5:15am local time. Consideration is also being given to tightening the P.I. schedule, with elimination of the "high line" route at Everett WA a top priority. Return to the "low line" would save from 5 to 15 minutes.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"I think the freeway program has been running amok for the last 20 years... My commitment is to rapid transit. There must be a better way to solve the transportation problem than pouring cement from one end of California to the other."

--Calif. Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. upon taking office Jan. 6.

CHRONOLOGY OF AMTRAK CAR AND LOCOMOTIVE ACQUISITION

(The information below, prepared and distributed by Amtrak, summarizes the corporation's steps in acquiring passenger cars and locomotives since its inception)

Amtrak

BUILDING THE AMTRAK FLEET

A Chronology

Date	Action	Cost
May 1, 1971	Amtrak begins operations with a fleet of cars and locomotives owned or leased by the railroads, including 49 Metroliners.	
June-August, 1971	Negotiations with railroads result in Amtrak purchase of basic fleet of 1,275 cars, including 24 rail diesel cars, from 13 railroads.	$ 17,500,000
September 8, 1971	12 additional Metroliner cars leased from Budd Company by Amtrak.	$ 60,000/month
November 1, 1971	Used passenger car heavy overhaul program began. By January 1, 1975, 1,035 cars completed.	$ 79,838,000
Winter-Spring, 1971-72	Purchase of 286 used diesel locomotives; 40 used electric locomotives acquired (30 purchased, 10 leased with option to buy).	$ 6,500,000
Summer, 1972	Ridership increases require continued use of railroad owned equipment. Lease-to-buy agreements made for over 200 cars.	
Fall, 1972	Purchase 137 more cars.	$ 640,500
November 2, 1972	Purchase 40 new 3,000 hp. diesel locomotives.	$ 18,000,000
January, 1973	Two five-car turbine trains built for Department of Transportation High Speed Ground Transportation Project bought from United Aircraft.	$ 2,829,000
March 26, 1973	Purchase 15 new electric 6,000 hp. locomotives.	$ 10,800,000
Spring, 1973	Acquire 115 surplus army cars from General Services Admin.	no cost
Spring, 1973	Purchase 19 cars.	$ 95,000
August, 1973	Two 5-car turbine trains, built for French National Railways, leased from ANF-Frangeco.	$ 85,000/month
October, 1973	Third 4-car turbine train, formerly used in Canadian service, bought from United Aircraft.	$ 2,450,000
October 12, 1973	Purchase 57 non-powered Metroliner cars to be locomotive-drawn.	$ 24,000,000
October 12, 1973	Purchase 110 new 3,000 hp. diesel locomotives.	$ 50,000,000
October 12, 1973	Purchase 11 new 6,000 hp. electric locomotives.	$ 7,600,000
Fall-Winter 1973-74	112 cars which had been operated under lease transferred to Amtrak ownership.	$ 3,314,000
Winter, 1973-74	Energy crisis precipitates intensive search for additional cars: following survey 113 cars bought (probably the last available in the U. S.).	$ 1,100,000
June 5, 1974	Purchase 200 non-powered Metroliner cars.	$ 82,000,000
June 21,1974	Purchase 6 ANF-Frangeco Turbos (five-car train sets).	$ 18,000,000
June 24, 1974	Purchase 25 3,000 hp. diesel locomotives (electric power generators), from General Electric Company.	$ 12,200,000
July 26, 1974	Purchase 7 high-speed, 5-car turbine powered trains based on French design, from Rohr Company for New York Boston service.	$ 30,300,000
October 25, 1974	Purchase 35 non-powered Metroliner cars.	$ 14,600,000
	TOTAL*	$380,766,000

*Total does not include lease costs.

TOTAL FLEET 12/23/74

Owned	Leased (or dedicated)	On Order	Totals
1,851 cars (all types)	261 cars	347 cars	2,459
402 diesel locos		25 diesel locos	427
30 electric locos	21 electric locos	26 electric locos	77

** Excludes equipment scrapped or used for parts.

THE DEATH OF comedian Jack Benny will leave a void in the hearts of rail buffs who appreciated his poking fun at rail passenger service. A stock site for Benny humor was Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal, where inevitably the loudspeaker proclaimed: "Train now leaving for Anaheim, Azusa and Cucamonga." In a skit on freeway construction, the fact was bared that Cucamonga was in trouble, and the announcement was approximately: "Train now leaving for Anaheim, Azusa. Cucamonga has been removed to make way for the freeway." Later, it was something like: "...Anaheim, Azusa, El Paso, Dallas, Chicago, New York, Atlanta, Miami and Cucamonga. They really moved it." Even the Las Vegas service received jibes. As Benny was being accosted by a racktrack tout, the LAUPT loudspeaker blared: "Train Seven-Eleven now leaving for Las Vegas, pulled by dice-ahl engines. Roll 'em."

--Glenn Lee

MIXED TRAIN OF THOUGHTS (continued from page 6)

THE ICC ANNOUNCED that it will hold hearings on passenger train standards to determine if revisions in the existing standards and regulations should be revised. Posters in rail stations indicate a list of cities where such hearings for oral presentations will be held. Rail patrons desiring a chance to speak on rail passenger standards before the ICC should address a letter to Robert L. Oswald, ICC, Washington DC 20423 before Jan. 31..... BRITAIN IS CALLING rail lovers to visit the country this year to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the world's first passenger-carrying railway. Exhibitions, fairs and special events will center around Darlington in old County Durham, one of the original stops on the first railway. In 1825, railway pioneer George Stephenson hitched an engine to 32 passenger cars and steamed from Shildon to Darlington to Stockton at a top speed of 8mph. The original engine, "Locomotion," will be on display at Darlington. More info from: British Tourist Authority, 680 Fifth Avenue, New York NY 10019..... THE OHIO ASSOCIATION of Railroad Passengers will be meeting Feb. 15 at Holiday Inn in Elyria, OH to hear L. Fletcher Prouty, Amtrak Director, Plans & Projects - Public Relations, speak about Amtrak's coming new services in Ohio. Info on the meeting from: OARP, Box 653, Xenia, OH 45385.....

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AMTRAK IS ASKING the ICC to modify its passenger service standards that require non-revenue lounges on trains that travel 6 hours or more. Amtrak said it doesn't have enough equipment to provide such lounges on all these trains, and needs to allocate them to the most important runs..... AMTRAK WILL DISCONTINUE its bus connection be-Norfolk and Newport News, VA, the corporation announced Dec. 31. The State Corporation Commission immediately protested, and asked the ICC to judge the case..... TWO OTHER EXEMPTIONS have been asked of the ICC by Amtrak: to exempt it from requiring food and beverage service on trains between midnight and 6am (hours when Amtrak said demand was "minimal"), and to exempt it from the requirement for reservations on the SAN JOAQUIN. Amtrak said that between last March and July there were "only 8" occasions when the train was so full that standees were seen. The cost of providing reservations for the Oakland-Bakersfield train was about $25,000 annually, Amtrak said..... BART IS REPORTED ready to ask for a fare surcharge or 10-25¢ or more per ride for patrons from Daly City, since 83% of them are said to be residents of San Mateo County who do not pay taxes to support the system..... THE PENN CENTRAL is asking for a 25% fare increase on commuter runs between Baltimore and Washington DC. The raise is to take effect Feb. 6, if approved by the Public Service Commission of Maryland and the ICC..... AMERICAN FREEDOM TRAIN on its nationwide tour beginning in April might have to bypass Portland, Oregon because of the hostility of the county chairman of Bicentennial activities, who said she is shocked by the costs to the county of providing facilities for the train's visit. "Besides that," she was quoted as saying, "I just don't feel the Freedom Train can be a meaningful experience for anyone"..... DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION is making ready to ask Congress for up to $300 million more to keep the Penn Central running, and to upgrade some of its track and equipment before it crumbles..... IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, requests have been filed, just before year-end, with the ICC and the state Public Utilities Commission, to use SP's Los Angeles-Santa Barbara Coast Line rails for commutertrains. Los Angeles County and the Rapid Transit District jointly made the legal move..... METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION of the San Francisco area at year-end released a report which calculates that major upgrading of the SP commute line, relocating the northern terminal either in Daly City to connect with BART, or in San Francisco closer to the downtown area, would increase traffic 50% in 4-6 years and cost $65-91 million. An alternative, to convert the line to rapid rail transit, would cost $750 million, and was called "infeasible." The study recommended conversion to push-pull train operation, installation of CTC, and purchase of new cars..... BURLINGTON NORTHERN CHAIRMAN Lou Menk frequently makes the front page with his colorful quips. The Wall Street Journal (Jan. 2) had him handing a reporter the Old Farmers Almanac with the reply "That's it" when asked for his forecast for 1975.....

TORONTO'S TRANSIT SYSTEM was operated "for free" on New Year's Eve 8pm Dec. 31 to 4am Jan. 1. The McGuiness Distillers Ltd. chartered the system for the 8-hour period to encourage safe travel during the celebration. No fares were collected, and no transfers were issued. Service hours were extended on most routes until about 4am, with the last subway train leaving downtown Toronto shortly after 3:30am, and most connecting routes adjusted to meet the last trains, which arrived at outer terminals about 4am.

IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, the Victoria-Saanich peninsula light rail plan is definitely being adopted by the governments involved. A new highway interchange north of Victoria, on the Trans-Canada route, will be designed to leave space for a light rail line to pass thru the various ramps.

Express Ads

COLOR SLIDES - Two new 25-slide sets feature Northwest steam power of the past decade (both logging and excursion) and passenger, mixed and freight operations of four Canadian railways: Quebec North Shore & Labrador, Cartier, Canada & Gulf Terminal and Greater Winnipeg Water District. Sets are $6 each postpaid. Or send 25¢ for a sample slide and list of all 19 sets available from Northwest Rail Images, 4891 Donald Street, Eugene, OR 97405.

PRIVATE RAILROAD CAR "LA CONDESA" is available for Oakland/Reno trips on weekends of February 1-2, 8-9 and 22-23. Get together a group of 20 who would enjoy riding a heavyweight, open-platform, lounge-observation car in luxury to Reno. Cost: only $55.00 per person for group of 20 (food, lodging & beverages not included). For reservations write: LA CONDESA, 969 Santa Ysabel Avenue, Baywood Park, CA 93402.

WANTED: Copy of book, "An Acquaintance with Alco" by Robert P. Olmsted. Write to Raymond Hardin, PO Box 8362, Chicago, Illinois 60680.

FOR SALE: An interesting selection of 12 different Pullman Company and Railroad passenger space diagram forms. Send $1.00 plus 25¢ postage and handling to Jack Ferry, 10041 South Prairie Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60628.

With a bicentennial coming up, wouldn't it be an honor if Amtrak would drop the ridiculous name of JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY and put back the more befitting name of GEORGE WASHINGTON for the Chicago-Cincy-DC train. JWR is a good car name, but for the train, NO. Merlin L. Marlowe, RR 2, Fairfax, Minnesota 55332.

the Block Line

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